



Washington, D.C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

3 December 1984

Libya: Supplying Terrorist Weapons [REDACTED]

Summary

Libya provides a wide variety of weapons to groups which commit acts of international terrorism. These weapons include conventional pistols, assault rifles, and submachineguns of both Western and Bloc origin, as well as more sophisticated or terrorist-specific ordnance such as man-portable anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, silenced and concealed pistols, and explosive devices.

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GI M 84-1022 1L  
December 1984

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Libya: Supplying Terrorist Weapons [REDACTED]

Introduction

Libya's ability to procure arms directly from other governments and indirectly on the international gray arms market ensures Tripoli a wide range of ordnance for use by Libyan as well as foreign terrorist groups. As a result of Tripoli's access to weapons, Libyan hit teams as well as diverse Libyan-supported foreign terrorist groups now possess the weapons necessary to attack:

- o Low flying commercial or military aircraft using man-portable SA-7 surface-to-air missiles.
- o Hardened vehicles--such as armored limousines--using RPG-7 anti-tank weapons.
- o Diplomatic, military, industrial and commercial installations using rocket-launched ordnance and improvised explosive devices.
- o Individuals using a variety of pistols, submachineguns, and assault and sniper rifles.

Given the wide range of terrorist organizations that receive arms from Libya, some of these weapons have been and will continue to be used against American targets. [REDACTED]

Small Arms

Conventional Firearms. Weapons traceable to Libya have turned up in the possession of a wide variety of terrorists throughout Europe and the Middle East. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Libya provided these arms directly to the Pakistani terrorists, who admitted having undergone small arms training in Libya and India, but claim to have received their weapons from an as yet unidentified party in Rome.

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Similar Libyan-bought Italian and Belgian weapons also have been discovered in the possession of other terrorist groups:

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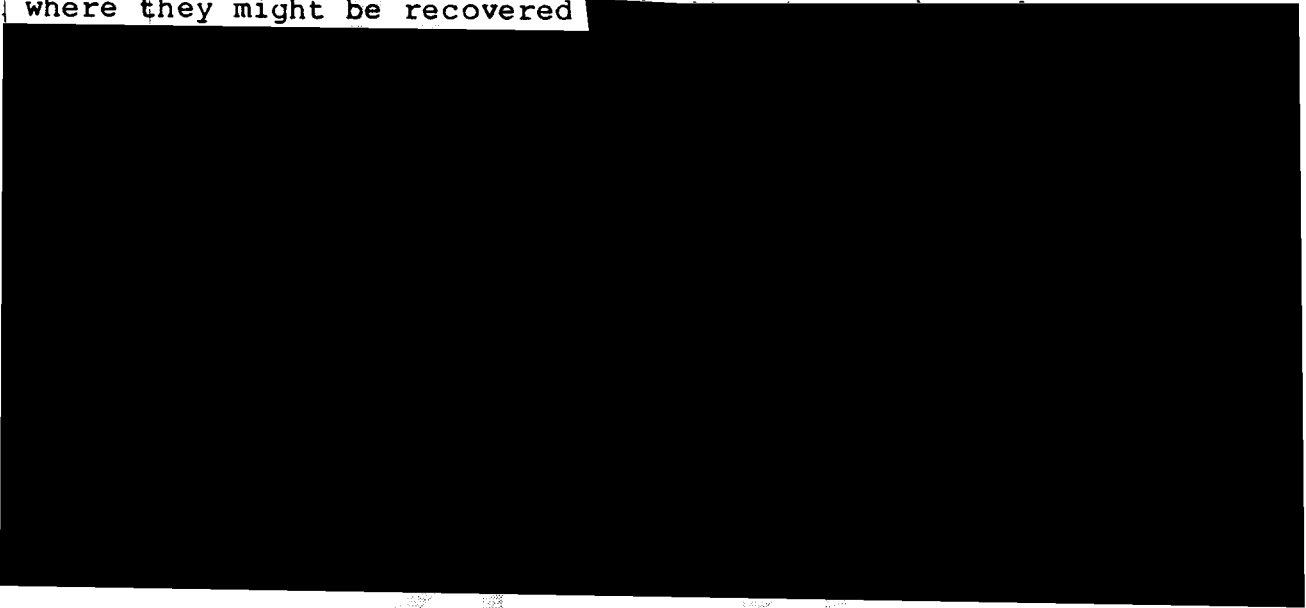
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This policy stands in sharp contrast with the elaborate means by which Libya seeks to dissociate itself from the weapons it provides to its own terrorists for attacks on Libyan dissidents abroad. These weapons are often acquired through a circuitous network involving one or more gray market arms brokers




or firms. The use of such front firms--with no demonstrable link to Libya--suggests that arms procured in this fashion are intended for politically sensitive terrorist actions in countries where they might be recovered



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Libya has also acquired US-made weapons via the gray arms market.

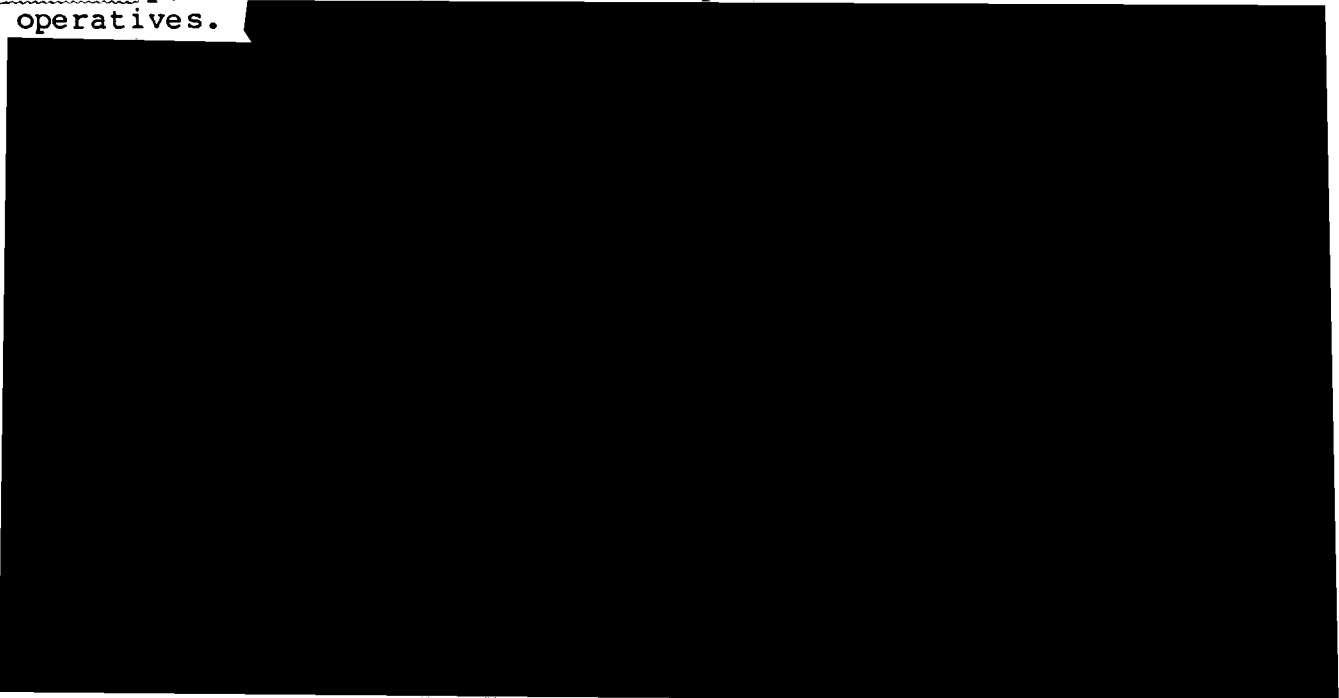


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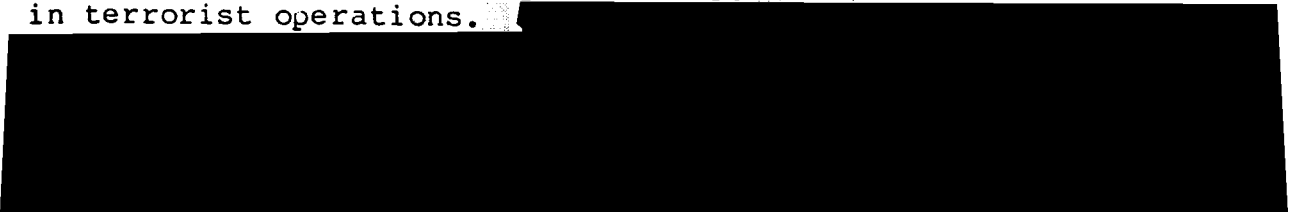
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Commercial versus Military Firearms. Although Libya frequently provides military weapons--such as Beretta submachineguns and Browning assault rifles and large caliber pistols--to foreign terrorists, Tripoli seems to prefer non-military, commercially available weapons for its own operatives.





Silenced Weapons. Tripoli also procures specially equipped firearms that by their very nature appear to be intended for use in terrorist operations.



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Tripoli also supplies silenced weapons to foreign terrorist groups. A generally reliable source reported, for example, that in 1983 Tripoli supplied at least 30 silenced pistols to anti-Arafat Fatah rebels.



Special Firearms. Libya also procures other types of exotic firearms on the gray arms market.

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Libyan terrorists may have attempted to kill at least one high ranking foreign leader with similar concealed weapons.

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Although details are lacking, it appears likely that Tripoli has acquired other exotic firearms designed for terrorist use.

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Special Ammunition. In addition to special weapons, Libya has also sought to acquire special purpose metal-piercing ammunition on the gray arms market.

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Other Ordnance

[REDACTED] In addition to small arms, Libya provides more sophisticated weapons to its own overseas operatives as well as to foreign terrorists. Most of this ordnance--such as man-portable anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, and explosive devices--are ideally suited for terrorist use and clearly not intended for "defensive" purposes.

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Anti-Tank Weapons. Another potent weapon frequently provided by Libya to foreign terrorist groups is the Soviet-style RPG-7 rocket-launcher. This man-portable, percussion-fired weapon weighs only 2.25 kilograms (loaded) and fires a high explosive armor-piercing grenade capable of defeating up to 330mm of rolled homogeneous steel plate at zero degrees obliquity. It has a practical range of between 300 to 500 meters and is ideally suited for use by terrorists in attacking hardened vehicles such as the armored limousines used in VIP protection. We believe that Libya has provided this weapon to diverse terrorist and insurgent groups throughout Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and probably Europe.

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Libya may also have been the source of many of the weapons used by the Provisional Irish Republican Army, which conducted

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the greatest number of its RPG-7 attacks on British targets--over one hundred--during 1972-1974. Press reports indicate, for example, that Irish authorities confiscated 5 tons of weapons and arrested several PIRA terrorists aboard a ship discovered in early 1973 off the Irish coast. This vessel--the S.S. Claudia--was owned by two West German gray market arms dealers and had sailed from Tripoli, Libya. [REDACTED]

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Crew-Served and Artillery Weapons. Libyan support for international terrorists also includes other items of heavy ordnance. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Libya supplied Palestinian guerrillas with North Korean 107mm and 122mm Katyusha rockets. [REDACTED]

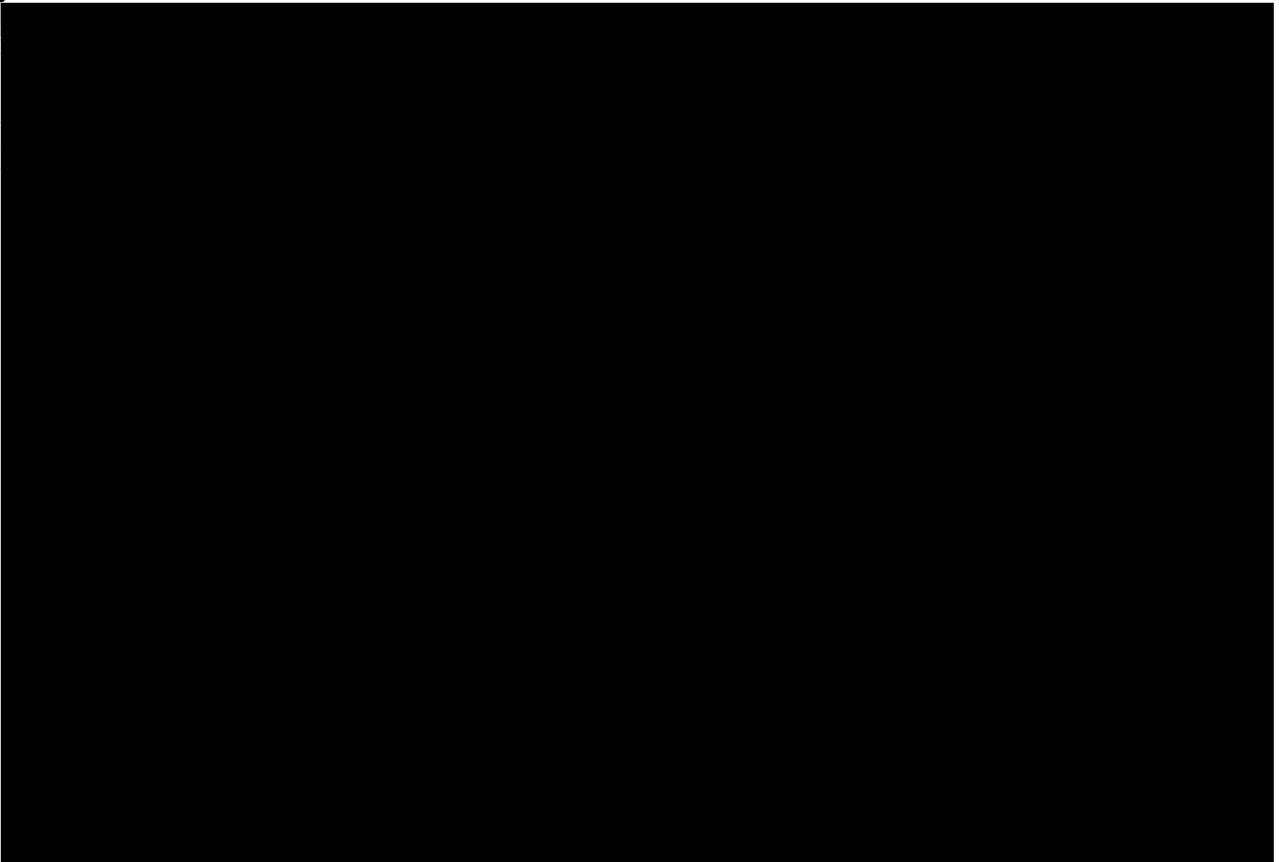
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[REDACTED] Palestinian groups use Katyusha rockets in attacks on Israeli settlements near the Lebanese, Syrian, and Jordanian borders. [REDACTED]

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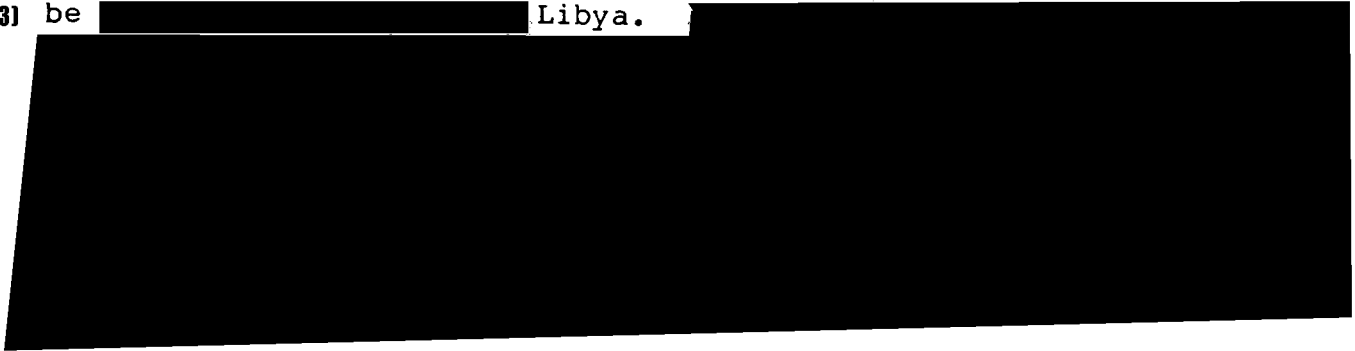
Libya has continued supplying large quantities of heavy weapons to Palestinian groups even after their 1982 withdrawal from Beirut. Most of this materiel is of Soviet design and probably supplied from Libya's own stockpiles of weapons purchased directly from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and North Korea. [REDACTED]

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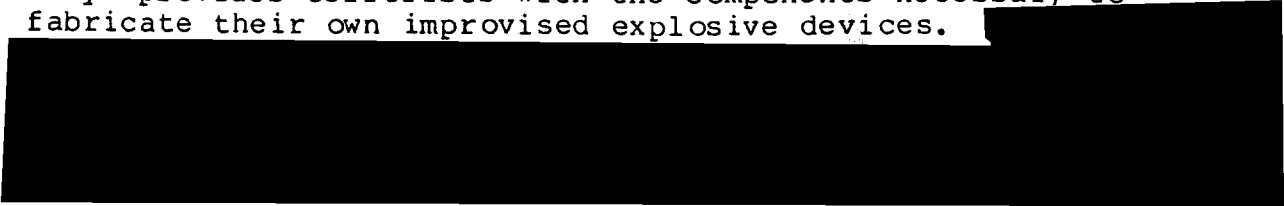
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Handgrenades and Explosives. As with firearms, much of the  
F(b)(1) explosive ordnance supplied by Tripoli to foreign terrorists can  
F(b)(3) be [REDACTED] Libya.  
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In addition to standard military high explosive ordnance,  
Libya provides terrorists with the components necessary to  
fabricate their own improvised explosive devices. [REDACTED]



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F(b)(1) Some of the more advanced bomb components supplied to  
F(b)(3) terrorists by Libya are of US origin. [REDACTED]  
(C) [REDACTED] in December 1983 Turkish security officials  
discovered an improvised explosive device in a suitcase about to



be loaded on a plane in Istanbul.<sup>5</sup>

[REDACTED]

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Tripoli may also have begun supplying foreign terrorists with extremely sophisticated, remote-controlled improvised explosive devices. One such device--believed to have been supplied by Libya--has recently been [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] is unlike any device used in the past by terrorist organizations. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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<sup>5</sup>Although no group has claimed this unsuccessful attack, we believe that the anti-Turkish Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) may have been responsible. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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<sup>7</sup>This Czech-made explosive has been used by various terrorist organizations since 1972, when it first appeared in Black September Organization letter bombs. It has also been used by various Armenian terrorist groups and was found [REDACTED] in several of the improvised explosive devices used during the 1981 Libyan-backed bombing campaign in the Central African Republic and the Sudan. [REDACTED]

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Prospects and Implications

We believe that Libya will continue to acquire large quantities of weapons and to supply some of this ordnance to groups which commit acts of international terrorism. As a recognized government, Libya can purchase most of these arms directly from other nations. We estimate that this year alone Tripoli received nearly one half billion dollars worth of armaments from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China and North Korea. Although we do not know if Moscow and other communist governments use Libya and other patron state supporters of terrorism to funnel arms to specific terrorist groups, we believe that these governments are fully aware that Tripoli provides large quantities of ordnance to such organizations. [REDACTED]

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Moreover, despite its reputation as a supporter of international terrorism, Tripoli is still able to purchase large quantities of small arms from Western nations. Press reports indicate that during the first half of 1984, for example, Libya purchased over 2200 tons of small arms and ammunition from Spain. Similarly, in mid-1984 the Brazilian government approved the sale of 20,000 9mm Taurus MT-12A submachineguns to Libya.<sup>8</sup> Even if such official, government-to-government sales could be halted, Tripoli would still enjoy easy access to a variety of ordnance--including silenced pistols and man-portable anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons--through private arms dealers and brokers on the international gray arms market. [REDACTED]

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Unconfirmed information also suggests that Tripoli may eventually be able to manufacture a wide range of weapons itself. [REDACTED]

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Besides the immediate threat of Libya arming international terrorists, the problem is compounded by the longevity of modern small arms, which, when properly cared for, can be cached for long periods or traded from one terrorist group to another. Thus, weapons already supplied by Libya to Palestinian

<sup>8</sup>This weapon is a Brazilian-made copy of the Italian Beretta M-12 submachinegun. [REDACTED]

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terrorists, for example, may turn up years from now in the possession of a violently anti-American group in Western Europe. As a result, we believe that Libyan arms acquisitions to date already ensure the availability of terrorist weapons for the remainder of the century. [REDACTED]

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